

Message Text

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C O N F I D E T I A L CAIRO 5725

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAID EG
SUBJECT: PL 480 TITLE I FY 76 PROGRAM

REF STATE 132193

1. REGRET PRESS OF BUSINESS PAST FEW DAYS PRECLUDED
EARLIER REPLY TO REFTEL. RE POINTS RAISED THEREIN, MY
COMMENTS FOLLOW:

A. I BELIEVE IT IS REASONABLE TO BEGIN WITH 500,000
MT WHEAT/WHEAT FLOUR ALLOCATION FOR FY 76 PROGRAM FOR EGYPT.
AS I UNDERSTAND IT, HOWEVER, SUCH A FIGURE FALLS SHORT OF THE
APPROXIMATELY \$120 MILLION PL 480 TITLE I FIGURE DISCUSSED
DURING SALZBURG TALKS. I ASSUME ADDITIONAL WHEAT AND
PERHAPS OTHER COMMODITIES, E.G. TOBACCO, WILL BE ADDED LATER
AND THAT I WILL BE AUTHORIZED TO SAY SO WHEN WE BEGIN
NEGOTIATIONS.

B. WHILE APPRECIATING CONSIDERATIONS CITED PARA 3
REFTEL, EGYPTIANS CLEARLY PREFER WHEAT RATHER THAN
WHEAT FLOUR. THEY BELIEVE THAT WITH WHEAT THEY GET
MORE FOR THEIR MONEY, E.G. FLOUR PLUS BRAN FOR CATTLE.
THERE IS LITTLE POINT IN RAISING SUBJECT WITH APPROPRIATE
EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS, SINCE AS DEPT AWARE BOTH FAHMY AND
MINISTER OF SUPPLY SHAZLI HAVE RELATIVELY RECENTLY
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REITERATED THEIR STRONG PREFERENCE FOR WHEAT.

C. DESPITE ABOVE, I SEE NO REASON WHY WE SHOULD NOT PROPOSE SPECIFIC WHEAT AND WHEAT FLOUR INCREMENTS AND STIPULATE THESE IN THE AGREEMENT AS SUGGESTED PARA 2 REFTEL. I APPRECIATE USDA'S INTEREST AND THAT OF US FLOUR MILLING INDUSTRY AND WOULD LIKE TO TRY TO KEEP THEM ON OUR SIDE. SAME TIME I WOULD HOPE THAT THE WHEAT FLOUR COMPONENT WOULD BE NEGOTIABLE AND THAT IT CAN, IF EGYPTIANS ARE INSISTENT, BE REDUCED IN FAVOR OF A LARGER QUANTITY OF WHEAT. IF OUR PL 480 PROGRAM IN EGYPT IS TO HAVE OPTIMUM POLITICAL IMPACT, WE SHOULD GIVE EGYPTIANS A FAIR VOICE IN IT AND NOT TRY TO SHOVE SOMETHING DOWN THEIR THROATS.

2. I AM ALSO STILL AWAITING INSTRUCTIONS TO NEGOTIATE AMENDMENT FOR FINAL 50,000 TONS OF WHEAT WHICH WE AGREED TO A SHORT TIME AGO. AT LAST REPORT, PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION FOR THIS AMOUNT HAD YET TO BE SIGNED, BUT WAS EXPECTED ANY DAY. WOULD BE USEFUL KNOW WHEN IT HAS BEEN SIGNED SO THAT WE CAN PROCEED WITH NEGOTIATIONS. WITH FY 75 RAPIDLY DRAWING TO A CLOSE AND EGYPTIAN MINISTERS SHUTTLE BETWEEN CAIRO AND ALEXANDRIA, IT MAY TAKE US A FEW DAYS TO MAKE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS ONCE WE ARE AUTHORIZED TO DO SO. HENCE, TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE.
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